

Bladen County Natural Area Inventory

SITES OF COUNTY SIGNIFICANCE

During the inventory, important biological features were identified at sites where the overall significance was insufficient to rank them as regionally significant or higher. Examples include longleaf pine habitat where absence of fire has resulted in domination by woody plants and the elimination of most herbs, and very small areas with good quality natural communities. All of these sites possess protection potential.

David Gam Bay is a Carolina bay complex located partly in Bladen Lakes State Forest just north of Charlie Long Mill Pond/Big Colly Bay natural area; the majority of the site is privately owned. Almost all of the bay rim habitat has been altered, and portions of the larger bay have been logged, but the bay basins are otherwise intact and support the High Pocosin and Pond Pine Woodland communities. This site also has a population of State rare white wicky (*Kalmia cuneata*).

Fred Poole Trail Flatwoods is located in Bladen Lakes State Forest south of Tatum Mill Pond/Cypress Bay natural area; a portion of the site is privately owned. The site is characterized by a series of low ridges and companion swales supporting Wet Pine Flatwoods and Pond Pine Woodland. The flatwoods habitat has become overgrown with woody vegetation due to a long period without fire. This site supports a population of State rare white wicky (*Kalmia cuneata*).

Smith Bay Flatwoods is located on the northeast rim of Smith Bay in the northeastern corner of Bladen County, and is privately owned. This site supports Wet Pine Flatwoods and Pine/Scrub Oak Sandhill longleaf pine communities. The canopies have been logged in the recent past and the absence of fire has reduced the herb layer, but the communities have very good restoration potential. State rare shortleaf yellow-eyed-grass (*Xyris brevifolia*) is found at this site.

Smith Bay Sand Ridge is a privately-owned site located southeast of Smith Bay. It comprises a small example of Xeric Sandhill Scrub longleaf pine community that has become overgrown with shrubs and small trees due to an extended period without fire. The canopy is mature.

Suzy Hill Natural Area is located in Bladen Lakes State Forest just north of Johnson Mill Pond natural area. The site is located on a sandy hill that rises 15-20 feet about the surrounding countryside. It supports a Xeric Sandhill Scrub longleaf pine community that may have originated as a pine plantation. The mature canopy is moderately dense and the ground surface is covered with pine needles, resulting in few shrubs and herbs. This is close to or within the only known North Carolina population for Grisatra underwing moth (*Catocala grisatra*).